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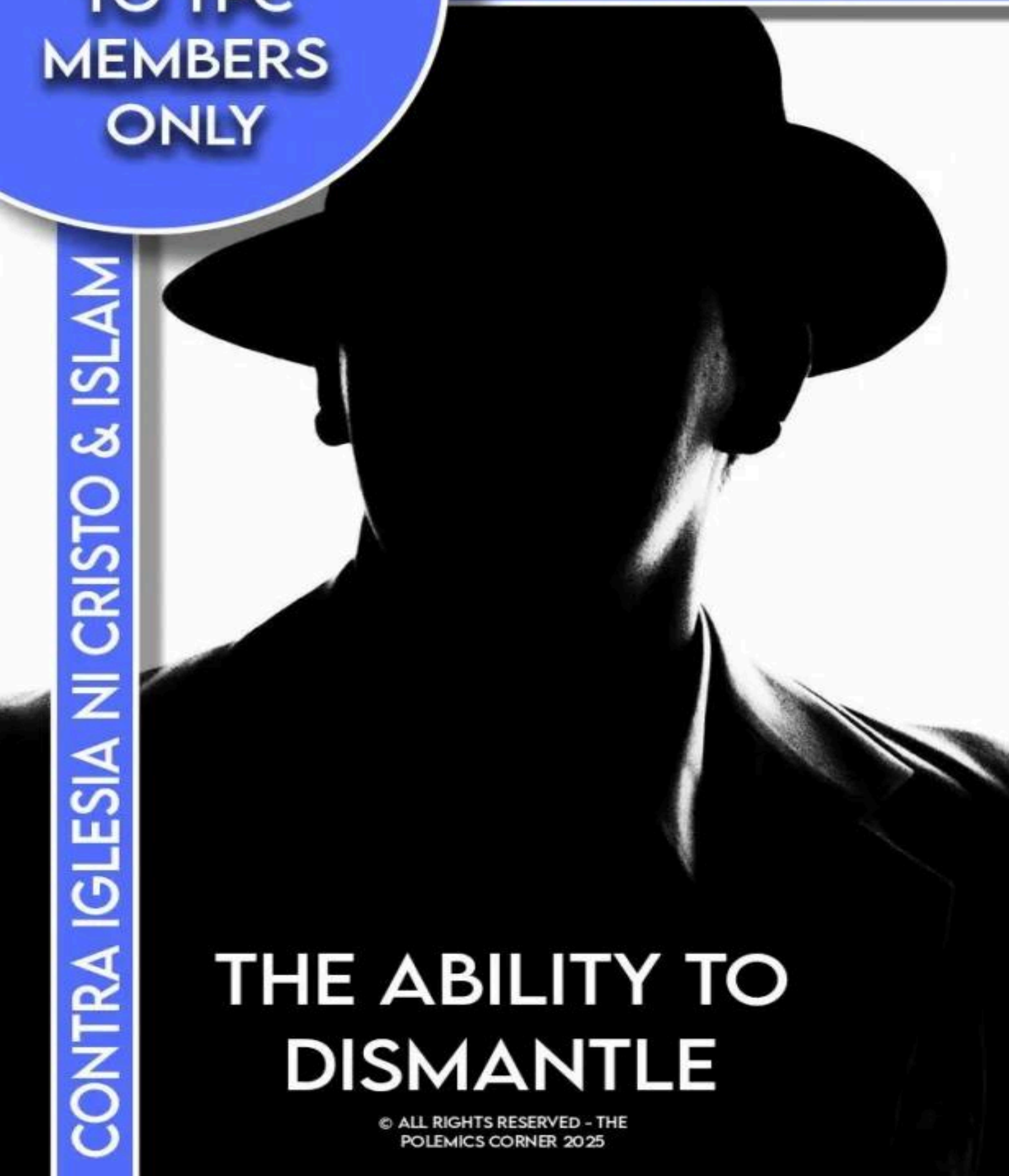

THE ABILITY TO DISMANTLE

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Praefatio

This book is written contrary to Islam and Iglesia ni Cristo, a guide that is made to help us dismantle arguments and heresies and to remind us that we have the ability to dismantle, therefore we must use this privilege that God gave us. In regards to defending the Catholic Faith, the Lord Jesus Christ, and giving the truth when it comes to lies that have blinded our eyes.

In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti.
Amen.

Argumenta - Metaphysica et Sacra Scriptura

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(i) Trinitarian Argumentation - to prove God is 3 in persons, to prove that this God is logically coherent to be 3 persons.

1. **Argument of Omnibenevolence -** God is all-loving in all points of time, thus he must love something that already exists before creation.

As stated in 1 John IV:VIII - Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. It is explicitly stated that God is love himself.

The Argument : God is love, he is all-loving, he is omnibenevolent. If so, who then was he loving before creation? (living beings)

Contention : If God is eternal, and he loves eternally. His act of love must already be, even if it is before creation since if he does not already commit the act of love before creation then his all-loving attribute is dependent on creation; Thus there is potentiality in the eternal God.

Q1: Why does it become absurd if God's omnibenevolence or the attribute of being "all-loving" becomes reliant on creation?

A1: Because God is independent from creation, he does not need anything from creation for he himself is the very principle where creation takes its being, if God's attribute of omnibenevolence becomes reliant on creation, this God then has potentiality and is not pure act. Because in order to be all-loving he must give that love to a recipient and this God must never change, if he does change then he has potency and once again he is not pure act.

Q2: Why can't God love us as an idea, thus he loves us eternally and does not need the other 2 eternal persons.

A2: This can not be, if God loves us only as an idea; then this is a love that is not expressed outwardly but inwardly, thus it is God loving his own intellect which means it is God loving himself not something other than himself. (God's intellect = his concept of us) something that is not yet actualized but is in potency.

2. **Argument of Absolute Divine Simplicity (ADS)** - God's Essence / Attributes is he himself.

In God, the essence (what he is) does not have a distinction from that he is (existence), God's essence or nature is to be a self-subsisting being in no need of a cause to exist since he is the first cause, to put it easily, if God's nature is to exist without a cause, it must be that his essence (to exist without a cause) is identical to his existence.

As stated in 1 John IV:VIII (1), Exodus IV:XIV (2)

(1) Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.
(2) I AM, WHO I AM.

i. God's attribute of love is God himself. ***[Essence = Existence = Attributes]*** No metaphysical composition, all identical.

ii. God is, who he is - This simply means that who God is (essence/nature) is who he is (existence) so what you think of God conceptually (his essence, attributes, and nature.) Is GOD himself as stated in the preceding formula → highlighted above.

God is → his Essence → his Nature → his Attributes (∴) therefore his attributes aren't distinct nor separate qualities but is God himself.

If we use this formula and look throughout scripture it will be

God's love = God himself.
God's will = God himself.
God's word = God himself.

Now if we check upon the Divine Scriptures, the doctrine of Absolute Divine Simplicity (ADS) would affirm Jesus is God.

*Psalm XXXIII:VI (33:6) states that "**By the word of the LORD the heavens were made**, and by the breath of his mouth all their host."*

*John I:IV (1:3) states that "**Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made**."*

*Colossians I:XVI (1:16) states that "**For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.**"*

All three verses given are sufficient, these verses prove that Jesus is the Word of God, and thus by the doctrine of Absolute Divine Simplicity, Jesus is God.

*Genesis II:VII (2:7) states that "Then **the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life**, and the man became a living being."*

*Job XXXIII:IV (33:4) states that **"The Spirit of God has made me**, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life."*

These two verses given are sufficient, these verses prove that the Holy Spirit is the Breath of God, thus the Holy Spirit is God by the doctrine of Absolute Divine Simplicity, the Holy Spirit is God.

3. **Logical Problem of Two Persons Worshipped (LPTPW)** - The Logical Problem about the Act of Worship upon the Father and the Son.

In the book of St. *Matthew, IV:X (4:10)* - Jesus explicitly tells Satan - *Away from me Satan for it is written '**Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.**'* This has a correlation to *Deuteronomy VI:XIII (6:13)* which also says - *"**Revere only your God יהוה and worship [God] alone**, and swear only by God's name."*

- אֶת־יְהוָ֥ה אֱלֹהֶ֖יךָ תִּירָ֑א וְאֹת֥וֹ תַעֲבֹ֖ד וּבִשְׁמ֥וֹ תִּשָּׁבֵֽעַ׃ 13

Revere only your God יהוה and worship [God] alone, and swear only by God's name.

https://www.sefaria.org/Deuteronomy.6.13?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en

The Logical Problem here is that if Jesus explicitly affirms to be worshipped yet in another passage he denies worship, why do Iglesia ni Cristo members still continue to worship him? It can not be said that it is for the enlightenment of the Father or for his joy, since he himself explicitly said - *Exodus XX:IV (20:4) "**Thou shalt have no other gods** before me."*

Furthermore, it is written in the book of *Revelations V:XIII (5:13)* - St. John says *"Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: "**To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb** be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"*

We see here that the Lamb (Jesus), and the one who sits on the throne (The Father) is worshipped in the same way as stated - "be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" Now if we ask, do we worship Jesus as God? For the Trinitarian the answer will be easily a yes and is backed up by the verse given in the preceding sentence(s) yet for the Unitarian this will be a logical problem, if they answer "no" then we may ask the person: Who is worshipped and praised with the saying "be praise and honor and glory and

power, for ever and ever.”? They can not say it is the Father since it is explicitly stated that the Lamb was also a person where the worship was directed to, another is that this would affirm that the Lamb is the same as The Father! Not in person but by essence.

4. **Logical Problem of The Trinity (LPT)** - The Logical Problem of The Trinity.

Q1: If the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, how are these 3 persons not God? (∴) therefore it is 3 Gods not 1. (Some also apply the Law of Identity and Law of Transitivity to further prove the 3 Persons are 3 Gods.)

A1: First we must distinguish "person" from "substance" St. Thomas Aquinas still uses the definition of Boethius when it comes to the word "person" which is - An individual substance of a rational nature. But if we use this definition when it comes to the 3 persons then it would be 3 substances rather than 1, so Aquinas argues – the 3 persons are 3 subsistent relations in God while we use the term "person" in the context of God, this is only used analogically and not applied the same way when it comes to humans. So when it comes to the denotation of a person; we are distinct and divided because of our individuality, whilst in God the word "person" which is analogically used, refers to the distinction caused by eternal relations that subsist within that divine substance "i.e. God"

In conclusion, God remains to be God and does not turn into Gods.

(ii) Dyophysite Argumentation - to prove Jesus is God or to prove Jesus is God using the criteria of the opposing party.

5. **Jesus is God based on Islamic Criteria** - The Double Standards when it comes to the Divine Messiah of the New Testament.

When it comes to Islamic Criteria we must see what Allah is, after that, we can look at the Messiah of the New Testament and this will finally help us understand that when it comes to the criteria muslims follow, they should also affirm that the Christian Messiah is God.

Allah is and will?

Allah (Is) :

*Al-Hadid 57:3 - He is **the First and the Last**, the Most High and Most Near,1 and He has ˹perfect˺ knowledge of all things.*

Allah (Will) :

*Al-Baqarah 2:28 - How can you deny Allah? You were lifeless and He gave you life, then **He will cause you to die and again bring you to life**, and then to Him you will ˹all˺ be returned.*

*Ar-Rum 30:19 - He brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living. And He gives life to the earth after its death. **And so will you be brought forth ˹from the grave˺**.*

Now we have established 2 things, what he (is) and what he (will) - He is the "First" and the "Last".

The other is that he will bring us to life, he shall bring forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living – "he gives life to earth when it dies and so will we, we will be brought forth from the grave when we die by Allah."

Now we must look at the Messiah of the New Testament, which is argued by muslims to not be God but only a prophet of God and a messenger sent by God not as God, but by God.

Jesus is and will?

Jesus (Is) :

Revelation XXII:XIII (22:13) - "I am the Alpha and the Omega, ***the First and the Last****, the Beginning and the End."*

Jesus (Will) :

John VI:XL (6:40) - "For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and ***I will raise them up at the last day****."*

As it is expressly declared, our Lord Jesus is called "the First and the Last," and He shall also "raise us up at the last day." Yet when one reads the descriptions of Allah in the Quran, they seem in many ways similar when it comes to those ascribed unto Christ in the New Testament.

6. **Objection against the Hypostatic Union** - The Logical Problem upon the Divinity of Jesus The Christ and his 2 Natures.

The objection commonly given against Jesus' divine physis (nature) is like formulated like this :

Q1: If Jesus is truly God, how did he die if it is within God's nature to not die?

A1: ***The Second Person (Christ) died in accordance to his human nature, not by his divine nature****,* ***Catholics do not uphold Monophysitism*** *which is the doctrine that Jesus only had 1 nature that is Divine and Human mixed into one, rather* ***Catholics uphold Dyophysitism*** *which is the teaching that Jesus had 2 natures, distinct yet not separate, united and not mixed based on the (Chalcedonian Creed) The Christ is 100% God & 100% Man.*

Hypostatic Union - Dyophysitism :
The 2 Natures are united in the Person of Christ, both are inseparable because both of them are the person of the Christ, that Person (The Son) Both natures belong to the one and same Person of Christ "i.e. Divine and Human" and furthermore the Divine Nature is united with the Human Body and the Human Soul of Jesus, there is only 1 consciousness not 2, lest it be 2 separate persons which is the heresy of Nestorianism.

Philippians II:VI (2:6) states that "Who, ***being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God*** *something to be used to his own advantage-" (read further)*

Hebrews II:IX (2:9) states that "But ***we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while****, now crowned with glory and honor* ***because he suffered death****, so that* ***by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.***

7. **If Jesus is God, who did he pray to?** - The Logical Problem upon the Divinity of Jesus The Christ and his 2 Natures (v2).

The Father is who Jesus prayed to, Jesus acknowledges a God because he became flesh for 2 reasons, (1) to profoundly save mankind from its sins and the other (2) so that we may have an absolute role model, so what Jesus does, we also must.

*Philippians II:V (2:5) - states that "**Yours is to be the same mind which Christ Jesus shewed**."*

*John XIII:XV (13:15) - states that "**I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you**."*

*1 Corinthians XI:I (11:1) - states that "**Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ**."*

The Messiah clearly declares that we should follow him in what he does and ought to be like him, St. Paul also says the same and wants us to follow him how he follows Christ – further affirming that Jesus the Messiah is someone that has absolute character in which we all must subsist and imitate.

Furthermore, Jesus praying to the Father does not negate the divine nature he inherently possesses because this nature is something that can not be separated or removed from the person of Christ. Jesus being God is not something that can be extracted to Christ, for, it is Christ.

The Son = God
The Father = also God

Q1: Could that mean Jesus prayed to himself?

*A1: No, because the relations between the persons are what makes them distinct from each other, not separate. **If we can not properly distinguish the persons we may fall into the following heresies**: (Modalism, Partialism, Unitarianism, etc.) Thus, Jesus praying to the Father does not make it that Jesus prays to himself, rather Jesus prays to a distinct person within the Trinity.*

In addition to this, some might argue that there is a paradox in the Hypostatic Union, how can Jesus both be omnipresent (Divine Nature) and on the other be found in one place (Human Nature) the contention here is that if Jesus really did have 2 natures then it would seem like there is 2 consciousness

turning it into the heresy of Nestorianism, (∴) therefore it is 2 persons rather than 1 person.

To answer this we must understand, the Hypostatic Union is the 2 natures of the Son (the second person in the Trinity) are 2 modes of existence which expresses existence of the Son in 2 modes, thus there is no contradiction when the Son is both omnipresent and non-omnipresent when he has 2 natures. The question can only be valid if the Son only has 1 nature.

S = The Son
G/M = Godman
E = Existence

E of ***S*** is expressed in 2 ways = ***G/M***, The Son's existence is expressed in 2 modes, but this is only 1 Existence expressed into 2 natures, not 2 existence expressed into 2 natures.

(iii) Catholic Argumentation - Answering common objections against the Catholic Traditions and Actions.

8. **Do Catholics Worship images?** - Icons, Statues, and venerable images. Do Catholics worship such?

Q1: Do Catholics worship the Images of Jesus with latria? Wouldn't this be worshipping images and materializing a God that is not material?

A1 : St. Thomas Aquinas answers this question - Q25, AIII Reply to Objection I :

Reply to Objection 1. *This commandment does not forbid the making of any graven thing or likeness, but the making thereof for the purpose of adoration, wherefore it is added: "Thou shalt not adore them nor serve them." And because, as stated above, the movement towards the image is the same as the movement towards the thing, adoration thereof is forbidden in the same way as adoration of the thing whose image it is. Wherefore in the passage quoted we are to understand the prohibition to adore those images which the Gentiles made for the purpose of venerating their own gods, i.e. the demons, and so it is premised: "Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me." But no corporeal image could be raised to the true God Himself, since He is incorporeal; because, as Damascene observes (De Fide Orth. iv, 16): "It is the highest absurdity and impiety to fashion a figure of what is Divine." But because in the New Testament God was made man, He can be adored in His corporeal image.*

Simplified : ***Exodus XXX:IV–V (30:4-5) does not forbid the making of statues, icons, and similar objects, but rather the use of these images for adoration.*** *The Scriptures explicitly tell us, "****Thou shalt not adore them (images) nor serve them (images).****" Therefore,* ***adoration is forbidden in the same way as the adoration of the subject whose image it represents****. Furthermore, the statues mentioned in Exodus XXX:IV–V (30:4-5) refers to demonic statues that are not of God, nor are they God Himself – the scriptures has made this clear in Exodus XXX:III (30:3) "Thou shall have no other gods before me." since God cannot be contained or fashioned into a statue, being Divine (Infinite) But because in the New Testament God was made man, He can be adored in His corporeal (material) image.*

9. **The Papacy** - Is the Papacy true?

First, there must be a reason for St. Peter's name being changed, we can see Father Abraham's name being changed to Abraham but before it was changed he was called Abram. The reason for his name being changed was because he will become a father of "multitude, or many." No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations.

*Genesis XVII:V (17:5) states that "**No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations**."*

Many more Prophets or Characters within the Holy Scriptures have had their name changed by God, and there is an allegorical meaning for these name changes, thus there must also be a meaning for St. Peter's name from Simon into Peter.

*John I:XLII (1:42) states that "And **he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said**, "**You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas**" (which, when translated, is **Peter**)."*

Further, this changing of name is not only the proof for the Papacy.

*John XXI:XV-XVII (21:15-17) states that "When they had finished eating, **Jesus said to Simon Peter**, "**Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?**" "**Yes, Lord**," he said, "**you know that I love you**." **Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."** Again Jesus said, "**Simon son of John, do you love me**?" **He answered**, "**Yes, Lord, you know that I love you**." **Jesus said**, "**Take care of my sheep**." **The third time he said to him**, "**Simon son of John, do you love me?**" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" **He said**, "Lord, you know all things; **you know that I love you**." **Jesus said**, "**Feed my sheep**.*

Though St. Peter denies Christ, he was entrusted with the role of being a pastor over the whole flock which entails a primacy among the Apostles.

Furthermore, as stated in *Luke XXII:XXXI-XXXII (22:31-32) - "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to sift all of you like wheat,* ***but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail****;* ***and when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers****."* We can see that Jesus prays specifically for Peter's faith, and he is commissioned to strengthen the others which further affirms the Primacy of St. Peter amongst the Apostles.

Q1: "Peter can't be the rock that Jesus refers to in Matthew 16:18. He uses the word petros (small stone) for 'Peter' but petra (large rock) for 'rock.' Why would he change the word if he was referring to Peter both times?"

A1: Protestant scholar D.A. Carson notes: Although it is true that petros and petra can mean "[small] stone" and "[large] rock" respectively in earlier Greek, the distinction is largely confined to poetry. Moreover the underlying Aramaic is in this case unquestionable; and most probably kêphaʾ was used in both clauses ("you are kêphaʾ and on this kêphaʾ"), since the word was used both for a name and for a "rock." The Peshitta (written in Syriac, a language cognate with Aramaic) makes no distinction between the words in the two clauses. The Greek makes the distinction between petros and petra simply because it is trying to preserve the pun, and in Greek the feminine petra could not very well serve as a masculine name (The Expositor's Bible Commentary on Matt. 16:18). He further notes: "Had Matthew wanted to say no more than that Peter was a stone in contrast with Jesus the Rock, the more common word would have been lithos ("stone" of almost any size). Then there would have been no pun—and that is just the point!" (ibid.). Although Jesus' words could have been translated into Greek using petros in both cases ("You are petros and on this petros"), petra may appear in the second instance simply to avoid using the same word too closely in quick succession. Avoiding repetition by using a synonym is often an important element of style (so much so that it is the reason pronouns exist). Even if we were to grant that petros and petra referred to small and large stones respectively, this would not show Peter isn't the rock. That interpretation assumes antithetic parallelism, where the two are contrasted ("You are a small stone, but on this other big rock . . . "). However, it could just as well be synthetic parallelism, where

the second idea builds on the first ("You may appear to be a small stone, but on the big rock you really are . . . ")

https://www.catholic.com/audio/ddp/petros-versus-petra

10. **The God of Christianity** - Who is the True God?

Matthew XXVIII:XIX (28:19) states that "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, ***baptizing them in the name*** *of* ***the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit****, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age-"*

I argue, if they are truly separate beings then it should grammatically be "**In the names**, rather than '**in the name**.'" This proves that they are 1 God, 1 in essence, and 1 in unity.

"It says "in the name" because there is unity of power; it does not say "in the names," since they are not three gods but one God."
— *Summa Theologiae* III, q. 66, a. 6 ad 4

It refers directly to the divine nature, not a proper noun.